

Former homeless man stops in Windsor during Canada-wide trek

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Joe Roberts was a homeless teen living under a bridge in Vancouver. He's now walking across Canada pushing a shopping cart to raise awareness to prevent, reduce and end youth homelessness.

Roberts started his Push for Change journey in St. John's, NL and stopped in Windsor to share his message. He is visiting schools and stopped at Charles Clark Square to deliver his message. He will be in Windsor for three days.

Roberts left home at 15 because of family conflict and ended up living on the streets. Roberts became dependent on drugs and at 19 he pushed his own shopping cart collecting cans and bottles around East Vancouver.

He says he's one of the lucky ones. Roberts had a supportive mother and a police officer invested in his well-being.

"I got a second chance," Roberts said. "I went back to school. In less than 12 years I went from being chronically homeless to being a celebrated Canadian entrepreneur."

Roberts is now the CEO and president of a multimedia company.

"I got to a place in my life that I wanted to pay it forward," Roberts said. That's when he started The Push for Change Challenge. He has walked almost 4,000 kilometres in 206 days, stopping to talk to schools and municipalities on the ways homelessness can be prevented. The program has raised about \$270,000.

"100 per cent of the money we raise goes towards our efforts," Roberts said.

Roberts will continue his walk to Vancouver. He estimates he will travel more than 9,000 kilometres. He said even people who are not directly affected by homelessness are coming up to him wanting to help.

"This is a great country and a country that can push for change and we're seeing that in every community we walk through."